

AN

ESSAY on MAN:

IN

FOUR EPISTLES

TO

H. ST. JOHN, LORD BOLINGBROKE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, THE

UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

BY ALEXANDER POPE, ESQ.

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AN
ESSAY ON MAN.



EPISTLE I.

*Of the NATURE and STATE of MAN, with re-
spect to the UNIVERSE.*



THE ARGUMENT.

OF Man, in the abstract. — That we can judge only
with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the
relations of systems and things, VER. 17. &c. to 69. That
man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to
his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the gen-
eral order of things, and conformable to ends and rela-
tions to him unknown, 69, &c. That it is partly upon
his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope
of a future state, that all his happiness in the present
depends, 73, &c. The pride of aiming at more knowl-
edge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of
man's error and misery. The impiety of putting him-
self in the place of GOD, and judging of the fitness or
unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice
of

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of his dispensations, 109 to 120. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation or expecting that perfection in the moral world which is not in the natural, 127 to 164. The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the Angels, on the other the bodily qualifications of the brutes, 165. That to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable, 181 to 198. That throughout the whole visible world, an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that reason alone counterwails all the other faculties, 199 to 224. How much farther this order and subordination of living creatures may extend, above and below us; were any part of which broken not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed. The extravagance, madness and pride of such a desire, 225 to 260. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, 273, &c.

AWAKE! my ST. JOHN! leave all meaner
 To low ambition and the pride of kings. [things
 Let us (since life can little more supply
 Than just to look about us and to die)
 Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man; 5
 A mighty maze! but not without a plan:

A wild



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5

A wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous
Or garden tempting with forbidden fruit. [shoot;
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield, 10
The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless-soar;
Eye nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can, 15
But vindicate the ways of God to man.

SAY first, of God above, or Man below,
What can we reason, but from what we know?
Of man, what see we but his station here,
From which to reason, or to which refer? 20
Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
'Tis our's to trace him only in our own.
He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs, 25
What other planets circle other suns,
What vari'd being peoples every star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame, the bearings, and the ties,
The strong connexions, nice dependencies, 30
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd thro', or can a part contain the whole?

Is the great chain that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee? 34

A 2

PRESUMPTUOUS

PRESUMPTUOUS man! the reason would'st thou
 Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind? [find
 First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess
 Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?
 Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made
 Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade? 40
 Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
 Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove?

Of systems possible, if 'tis confess'd
 That wisdom infinite must form the best,
 Where all must full or not coherent be, 45
 And all that rises, rise in due degree;
 Then, in the scale of life and sense, 'tis plain
 There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man;
 And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
 Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong? 50

RESPECTING man whatever wrong we call,
 May, must be right, as relative to all.
 In human works, though labour'd on with pain,
 A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
 In God's, one single can its end produce, 55
 Yet serves to second too some other use.
 So man, who here seems principal alone,
 Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
 Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole. 60

WHEN

WHEN the proud steed shall know, why man
restrains

His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains ;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Now wears a garland, an Ægyptian god ;
Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend. 65
His action's, passion's, being's, use and end ;
Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd ; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.

THEN say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault ;
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought ; 70
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place,
His time a moment, and a point his space.

HEAV'N from all creatures hides the book of
fate,

All but the page prescrib'd, their present state,
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know,
Or who could suffer being here below ? 76
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?
Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood. 80
Oh blindness to the future ! kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n,
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms, or systems, into ruin hurl'd, 85
And now a bubble burst, and now a world !

HOPE

HOPE humbly then, with trembling pinions soar;
 Wait the great teacher, Death, and God adore!
 What future bliss he gives not thee to know,
 But gives that hope to be thy blessing now. 90
 Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
 Man never *is*, but always *to be* blest;
 The soul uneasy, and confin'd at home,
 Rests, and expatiates, in a life to come.

Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind 95
 Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
 His soul, proud science never taught to stray
 Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
 Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n
 Behind the cloud topt hill, a humbler heav'n, 100
 Some safer world, in depth of woods embrac'd,
 Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,
 Where slaves once more their native land behold,
 No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
 To *be*, contents his natural desire, 105
 He asks no angel's wing, or seraph's fire,
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.
 Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense
 Weigh thy opinion against Providence: 110
 Call imperfection what thou fanci'st such,
 Say, here he gives too little, there too much;
 Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
 Yet cry, If man's unhappy, God's unjust;

If

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9

If man alone engross not Heav'n's high care, 115
Alone made perfect here, immortal there ;
Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his justice, be the GOD of GOD !

IN reas'ning pride, my friend, our error lies ;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies. 120
Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels, men rebel ;
And who but wishes to invert the laws 125
Of order, sins against th' Eternal Cause.

ASK for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use, pride answers, " 'Tis for mine :
" For me kind nature wakes her genial pow'r,
" Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r ;
" Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew 131
" The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew ;
" For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings ;
" For me, health gushes from a thousand springs ;
" Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me, rise ; 135
" My footstool earth, my canopy the skies."

BUT errs not nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, or nations to the deep ? 140
" No,

" No, ('tis repli'd) the first Almighty Cause
 " Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws ;
 " Th' exceptions few ; some change since all began,
 " And what created, perfect ?" Why then man ?
 If the great end be human happiness, 145
 Then nature deviates, and can man do less ?
 As much that end a constant course requires
 Of show'rs and sunshine, as of man's desires :
 As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
 As men forever temp'rate, calm and wise. 150
 If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's de-
 Why then a Borgia or a Catiline ? [sign,
 From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs ;
 Account for moral, as for nat'ral things :
 Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit ?
 In both to reason right, is to submit, 156

BETTER for us, perhaps it might appear,
 Were there all harmony, all virtue here ;
 That never air or ocean felt the wind ;
 That never passion discompos'd the mind : 160
 But all subsists by elemental strife ;
 And passions are the elements of life.
 The gen'ral order, since the whole began,
 Is kept in nature, and is kept in man.

WHAT would this man ? Now upward will he
 soar,
 And little less than angel, would be more ; 166
 Now looking downward, just as griev'd appears
 To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.

Made

Made for his use, all creatures if he call,
 Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all ? 170
 Nature to these, without profusion kind,
 The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd ;
 Each seeming want compensated of course,
 Here, with degrees of swiftness, there, of force ;
 All in exact proportion to the state, 175
 Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.
 Each beast, each insect, happy in its own,
 Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone ?
 Shall he, alone, whom rational we call,
 Be pleas'd with nothing, if not blest'd with all ? 180

THE blifs of man (could pride that blessing find)
 Is, not to act, or think, *beyond* mankind ;
 No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
 But what his nature and his state can bear.
 Why has not man a microscopick eye ? 185
 For this plain reason, man is not a fly.
 Say what the use, were finer opticks giv'n,
 T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n ?
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
 To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore ? 190
 Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,
 Die of a rose in aromatick pain ?
 If nature thunder'd in his opening ears,
 And stunn'd him with the musick of the spheres,
 How would he wish, that heav'n had left him still
 The whisp'ring zephyr, and the purling rill ! 196
 Who

Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives, and what denies ?

FAR as creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends : 200
Mark how it mounts, to man's imperial race
From the green myriads in the peopled grass !
What modes of sight, betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam :
Of smell, the headlong lioness between, 205
And hound sagacious on the tainted green :
Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,
To that which warbles through the vernal wood :
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine,
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line : 210
In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew.
How instinct varies, in the groveling swine,
Compar'd, half reas'ning elephant ! with thine ;
'Twixt that, and reason, what a nice barrier, 215
For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near !
Remembrance and reflection, how alli'd ;
What thin partitions sense from thought divide :
And middle natures, how they long to join,
Yet never pass th' insuperable line ! 220
Without this just gradation could they be
Subjected these to those, or all to thee ?
The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,
Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one ?

SEE,

SEE, thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,
 All matter quick, and bursting into birth. 226
 Above, how high progressive life may go !
 Around, how wide ! how deep extend below !
 Vast chain of being ! which from God began,
 Nature's ethereal, human, angel, man, 230
 Beast, bird, fish, insect ! what no eye can see,
 No glass can reach ! from infinite to thee,
 From thee to nothing !—On superiour pow'rs
 Were we to press, inferiour might on ours :
 Or in the full creation leave a void, 235
 Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd ;
 From nature's chain whatever link you strike,
 Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

AND if each system in gradation roll,
 Alike essential to th' amazing whole ; 240
 The least confusion but in one, not all
 That system only, but the whole must fall.
 Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
 Planets and suns rush lawless thro' the sky.
 Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd, 245
 Being on being wreck'd, and world on world,
 Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,
 And nature tremble, to the throne of God ! [thee ?
 All this dread Order break ?—For whom ? For
 Vile worm !—O madness ! pride ! impiety ! 250

WHAT if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
 Or hand to toil, aspir'd to be the head ?

B

What

What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd
 To serve mere engines to the ruling mind ?
 Just as absurd, for any part to claim 255
 To be another, in this gen'ral frame :
 Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains,
 The great directing MIND of ALL ordains.

ALL are but parts of one stupendous whole,
 Whose body nature is, and God the soul ; 260
 That chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
 Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame ;
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
 Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent, 265
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent,
 Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
 As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart,
 As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
 As the rapt seraph that adores and burns ; 270
 To him, no high, no low, no great, no small :
 He fills, he bounds, connects and equals all.

CEASE then, nor *Order* Imperfection name :
 Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
 Know thy own point : This kind, this due degree
 Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on
 Submit, in this, or any other sphere, [thee. 275
 Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear ;
 Safe in the hand of one disposing pow'r,
 Or in the natal, or the mortal hour. 280

All

55 All nature is but art, unknown to thee ;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see ;
All discord, harmony, not understood ;
All partial evil, universal good :
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite, 285
One truth is clear ; " Whatever is, is RIGHT."

EPISTLE



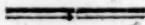
EPISTLE II.

*Of the NATURE and STATE of MAN, with respect
to HIMSELF as an Individual.*



THE ARGUMENT.

THE business of man is not to pry into God, but to study himself. His middle nature ; his powers and frailties, and the limits of his capacity, 43. The two principles of man, self love and reason, both necessary ; self love the stronger, and why ; their end the same, 83. The passions, and their use, 83 to 120. The predominant passion, and its force, 122 to 150 ; its necessity, in directing men to different purposes, 153, &c. its providential use, in fixing our principle and ascertaining our virtue, 167. Virtue and vice joined in our mixt nature ; the limits near, yet the things separate, and evident. What is the office of reason, 187, &c. How odious vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, 209. That, however, the ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions, and imperfections, 230, &c. How usefully they are distributed to all orders of men, 233. How useful they are to society, 241, and to the individuals. 253. In every state, and in every age of life, 263, &c.



KNOW then thyself, presume not God to scan ;
The proper study of mankind is Man.

PLAC'D

PLAC'D on this isthmus of a middle state,
 A being darkly wise, and rudely great :
 With too much knowledge for the sceptick side; 5
 With too much weakness for the Stoick's pride,
 He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest,
 In doubt to deem himself a God, or beast ;
 In doubt his mind or body to prefer,
 Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err ; 10
 Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
 Whether he thinks too little, or too much :
 Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd ;
 Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd ;
 Created half to rise, and half to fall ; 15
 Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all ;
 Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd ;
 The glory, jest and riddle, of the world !

Go, wond'rous creature ! mount where science
 guides,
 Go measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides, 20
 Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
 Correct old time, and regulate the sun ;
 Go soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,
 To the first good, first perfect and first fair ;
 Or tread the mazy round his follow'rs trod, 25
 And quitting sense call imitating God,
 As eastern priests in giddy circles run,
 And turn their heads to imitate the sun.
 Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule ; 30
 Then drop into thyself, and be a fool !

SUPERIOUR beings, when of late they saw
 A mortal man unfold all nature's law,
 Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
 And shew'd a NEWTON as we shew an ape.

COULD He, whose rules the rapid comet bind, 35
 Describe, or fix, one movement of his mind?
 Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,
 Explain his own beginning, or his end?
 Alas what wonder! man's superior part
 Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art; 40
 But when his *own* great work is but begun,
 What reason weaves, by passion is undone.

TRACE science then, with modesty thy guide;
 First strip off all her equipage of pride;
 Deduct what is but vanity or dress, 45
 Or learning's luxury or idleness;
 Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,
 Mere curious pleasure or ingenious pain;
 Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
 Of all our vices have created arts; 50
 Then see how little the remaining sum,
 Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come!

Two principles in human nature reign;
 Self love, to urge, and reason, to restrain;
 Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call, 55
 Each works its end, to move, or govern all:

And

And to their proper operation still
Ascribe all good, to their improper, ill.

SELF love the spring of motion acts the soul ;
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole. 60
Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And but for this were active to no end.
Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate and rot ;
Or meteor like, flame lawless thro' the void, 65
Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

MOST strength the moving principle requires
Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires ;
Sedate and quiet the comparing lies,
Form'd but to check, delib'rate and advise. 70
Self love still stronger, as its objects nigh ;
Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie ;
That sees immediate good, by present sense,
Reason, the future, and the consequence :
Thicker than arguments, temptations throng, 75
At best more watchful this, but that more strong.
The action of the stronger to suspend,
Reason still use, to reason still attend :
Attention, habit and experience gains,
Each strengthens reason, and self love restrains. 80

LET subtle schoolmen teach these friends to
More studious to divide, than to unite, [fight,
And

And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.
 Wits, just like fools, at war about a name, 85
 Have full as oft, no meaning, or the same.
 Self love and reason to one end aspire,
 Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire :
 But greedy that its object would devour,
 This taste the honey, and not wound the flower :
 Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood, 91
 Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

MODES of self love the passions we may call ;
 'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all :
 But since not every good we can divide, 96
 And reason bids us for our own provide ;
 Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
 List under reason, and deserve her care :
 Those that, imparted, court a nobler aim,
 Exalt their kind, and take some virtur's name. 100

IN lazy apathy let Stoicks boast
 Their virtue fix'd ; 'tis fix'd as in a frost,
 Contracted all, retiring to the breast ;
 But strength of mind is exercise, not rest :
 The rising tempest puts in act the soul, 105
 Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
 On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
 Reason the card, but passion is the gale :
 Nor God alone in the still calm we find ;
 He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind. 110

PASSIONS,

PASSIONS, like elements, tho' born to fight,
Yet mix'd and soft'ned, in his works unite :

85 These 'tis enough to temper and employ ;
But what composes man can man destroy ?
Suffice that reason keep to nature's road, 115
Subject, compound them, follow her and God.

LOVE, hope and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,
91 Hate, fear and grief, the family of pain,
These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,
Make and maintain, the balance of the mind : 120
The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife
Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

96 PLEASURES are ever in our hands or eyes,
And when in act they cease, in prospect rise ;
Present to grasp, and future still to find, 125
The whole employ of body and of mind.
All spread their charms, but charm not all alike ;
On diff'rent senses, diff'rent objects strike ;
Hence diff'rent passions more or less inflame,
As strong or weak, the organs of the frame ; 130
And hence one master passion in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

98 As man, perhaps the moment of his breath,
Receives the lurking principle of death ;
The young disease that must subdue at length, 135
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his
strength :

So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
 The mind's disease, its ruling passion came ;
 Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
 Soon flows to this, in body and in soul ;
 Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
 As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
 Imagination plies her dangerous art,
 And pours it all upon the peccant part.

NATURE its mother, habit is its nurse ;
 Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse ;
 Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r,
 As heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sour ;
 We, wretched subjects, though to lawful sway,
 In this weak queen, some fav'rite still obey.
 Ah ! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
 What can she more, than tell us we are fools ?
 Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend,
 A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend !
 Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade
 The choice we make, or justify it made :
 Proud of an easy conquest all along,
 She but removes weak passions for the strong ;
 So, when small humours gather to a gout,
 The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.

YES, nature's road must ever be preferr'd ;
 Reason is here no guide, but still a guard ;
 'Tis her's to rectify, not overthrow,
 And treat this passion more as friend than foe :

A mightier

mightier pow'r the strong direction sends, 165
and sev'ral men impels to sev'ral ends.

like varying winds, by other passions tost,
this drives them constant to a certain coast.
let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory please,
or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease : 170
thro' life 'tis follow'd, ev'n at life's expence :
the merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
the monk's humility, the hero's pride,
all, all alike, find reason on their side.

TH' eternal art, educing good from ill, 175
grafts on this passion our best principle ;
tis thus, the mercury of man is fix'd,
strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd,
the dross cements what else were too refin'd,
and in one int'rest body acts with mind. 180

As fruits ungrateful to the planter's care,
on savage stocks inserted, learn to bear,
the surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
wild nature's vigour working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear, 185
from spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear !
see anger, zeal and fortitude supply ;
ev'n av'rice, prudence ; sloth, philosophy :
lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,
gentle love, and charms all womankind : 190
envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
emulation in the learn'd or brave :

Nor

Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,
But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame.

THUS nature gives us (let it check our pride) 19
The virtue nearest to our vice alli'd ;
Reason the bias turns to good from ill,
And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will,
The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,
In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine. 20
The same ambition can destroy or save,
And makes a patriot, as it makes a knave.

THIS light and darkness in our chaos join'd,
What shall divide ? the God within the mind.

EXTREMES in nature equal ends produce, 20
In man, they join to some mysterious use :
Tho' each by turns the other's bounds invade,
As in some well wrought picture, light and shade,
And oft so mixt, the diff'rence is too nice
Where ends the virtue, or begins the vice. 21

FOOLS ! who from hence into the notion fall,
That vice or virtue there is none at all.
If white and black blend, soften and unite
A thousand ways, is there no black or white ?
Ask your own heart ; and nothing is so plain ; 21
'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.

VICE is a monster of so frightful mien,
 As, to be hated, needs but to be seen ;
 Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace. 220
 But where the extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed :
 Ask, where's the north ? at York, 'tis on the Tweed,
 In Scotland, at the Orcades, and there
 At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
 No creature owns it in the first degree, 225
 But thinks his neighbour farther gone than he.
 Ey'n those who dwell beneath its very zone
 Or never feel the rage, or never own ;
 What happier natures shrink at with affright,
 The hard inhabitant contends is right. 230

VIRTUOUS and vicious every man must be,
 Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree :
 The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise,
 And e'en the best by fits what they despise.
 'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill, 235
 For, vice or virtue, self directs it still ;
 Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal :
 But Heav'n's great view is one, and that the whole :
 That counter works each folly and caprice ;
 That disappoints th' effects of ev'ry vice : 240
 That happy frailties to all ranks appli'd,
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,
 Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief.

That,

C

That, virtue's ends from vanity can raise, 245
 Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise ;
 And build on wants, and on defects of mind,
 The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.

HEAV'N, forming each on other to depend,
 A master, or a servant, or a friend, 250
 Bids each on other for assistance call,
 'Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all,
 Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
 The common int'rest, or endear the tie :
 To these we owe true friendship, love sincere, 255
 Each home felt joy that life inherits here ;
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign ;
 Taught half by reason, half by mere decay,
 To welcome death, and calmly pass away. 260

WHATE'ER the passion, knowledge, fame, or
 self,
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself :
 The learn'd is happy, nature to explore ;
 The fool is happy that he knows no more ;
 The rich is happy in the plenty given ; 265
 The poor contents him with the care of Heaven.
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
 The sot a hero, lunatick a king ;
 The starving chymist in his golden views
 Supremely blest, the poet in his muse. 270

SEE,

SEE, some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,
 And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend ;
 See ! some fit passion ev'ry age supply,
 Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

BEHOLD the child, by nature's kindly law, 275
 Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw :
 Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
 A little louder, but as empty quite :
 Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his ripèr stage,
 And beads and pray'r books are the toys of age :
 Pleas'd with his bauble still, as that before ;
 'Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.
 Mean while opinion gilds with varying rays
 Those painted clouds that beautify our days ;
 Each want of happiness by hope suppli'd, 285
 And each vacuity of sense by pride :
 These build as fast as knowledge can destroy :
 In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy ;
 One prospect lost, another still we gain ;
 And not a vanity is giv'n in vain ; 290
 E'en mean self love becomes, by force divine,
 The scale to measure others' wants by thine.
 See ! and confess, one comfort still must rise,
 'Tis this, tho' *man's a fool*, yet GOD IS WISE.



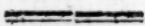
EPISTLE III.

*Of the NATURE and STATE of MAN, with respect
to SOCIETY.*



THE ARGUMENT.

THE whole universe *one system of society, ver. 7, &c.*
Nothing is made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for a-
nother, 27. The happiness of animals mutual, 49. Rea-
son or instinct operate alike to the good of each individu-
al, 79. Reason or instinct operate alike to society, in all
animals, 109. How far society carried by instinct, 115;
how much farther by reason, 128. Of that which is
called the state of nature, 144. Reason instructed by in-
stinct in the invention of arts, 166; and in the forms of
society, 176. Origin of political societies, 196. Origin
of monarchy, 207. Patriarchal government, 212. Origin
of true religion and government, from the same princi-
ple, of love, 231, &c. Origin of superstition and tyran-
ny, from the same principle, of fear, 237, &c. The in-
fluence of self love, operating to the social and publick
good, 266. Restoration of true religion and govern-
ment on their first principle, 285. Mixt government,
288. Various forms of each, and the true end of all,
300, &c.



HERE then we rest; "The Universal cause
"Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."

In all the madness of superfluous health,
The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,
Let this great truth be present night and day, 5
But most be present, if we preach or pray.

Look round our world ; behold the chain of
love

Combining all below and all above.
See plastick nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend. 10
Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.
See matter next, with various life endu'd,
Press to one centre still, the gen'ral good.
See dying vegetables life sustain, 15
See life dissolving vegetate again :
All forms that perish, other forms supply,
By turns we catch the vital breath, and die :
Like bubbles on the sea of matter borne,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return. 20
Nothing is foreign ; parts relate to whole ;
One all extending, all preserving soul
Connects each being, greatest with the least ;
Made beast in aid of man, and man of beast ;
All serv'd, all serving. Nothing stands alone ; 25
The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

HAS God, thou fool ! work'd solely for thy
good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food !
C 2 Who

Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
 For him as kindly spreads the flow'ry lawn. 30
 Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
 Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
 Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
 Loves of his own, and raptures swell the note.
 The bounding steed you pompously bestride, 35
 Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
 Is thine alone the seed that sows the plain?
 The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain.
 Thine the full harvest of the golden year?
 Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer. 40
 The hog that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,
 Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

KNOW, nature's children shall divide her care;
 The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.
 While man exclaims, "See all things for my use!"
 "See man for mine," replies a pamper'd goose; 46
 And just as short of reason he must fall,
 Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

GRANT that the pow'rful still the weak con-
 trol;
 Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole: 50
 Nature that tyrant checks: He only knows,
 And helps, another creature's wants and woes.
 Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,
 Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove?
 Admires

Admires the jay the insects gilded wings ? 55

Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings ?

Man cares for all : To birds he gives his woods,

To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods ;

For some his int'rest prompts him to provide,

For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride : 60

All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy

Th' extensive blessing of his luxury ;

That very life his learned hunger craves,

He saves from famine, from the savage saves :

Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast, 65

And, till he ends the being, makes it blest ;

Which sees no more the stroke, nor feels the pain,

Than favour'd man by touch ethereal slain.

The creature had his feast of life before ;

Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er ! 70

To each unthinking being, Heav'n a friend,

Gives not the useless knowledge of its end :

To man imparts it ; but with such a view

As while he dreads it, makes him hope it too :

The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear, 75

Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.

Great standing miracle ! that Heav'n assign'd

Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

WHETHER with reason, or with instinct blest,

Know, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best : 80

To bliss alike by that direction tend,

And find the means proportion'd to their end.

Say,

Say, where full instinct is th' unerring guide,
 What pope or council can they need beside ?
 Reason, however able, cool at best, 85
 Cares not for service, or but serves when prest,
 Stays 'till we call, and then not often near ;
 But honest instinct comes a volunteer,
 Sure never to o'ershoot, but just to hit ;
 While still too wide or short is human wit ; 90
 Sure by quick nature happiness to gain,
 Which heavier reason labours at in vain.
 This too serves always, reason never long ;
 One must go right, the other may go wrong.
 See then the acting and comparing pow'rs, 95
 One in their nature, which are two in ours !
 And reason raise o'er instinct as you can,
 In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis man.

WHO taught the nations of the field and wood
 To shun their poison and to choose their food ? 100
 Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
 Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand ?
 Who made the spider parallels design,
 Sure as De Moivre, without rule or line ?
 Who bid the stork, Columbus like, explore 105
 Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before ?
 Who calls the council, states the certain day,
 Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way ?

GOD, in the nature of each being, founds
 Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds ;

110
 But

But as he fram'd a whole, the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness :
So from the first, eternal ORDER ran,
And creature link'd to creature, man to man.
Whate'er of life all quick'ning ether keeps, 115
Or breaths thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,
Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.
Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood, 120
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace ;
They love themselves, a third time, in their race.
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the fires defend ; 126
The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,
There stops the instinct, and there ends the care :
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
Another love succeeds, another race. 130
A longer care man's helpless kind demands ;
That longer care contracts more lasting bands :
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the int'rest and the love :
With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn ; 135
Each virtue in each passion takes its turn ;
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
That graft benevolence on charities.
Still as one brood, and as another rose,
These nat'ral love maintain'd habitual those : 140
The

The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect man,
 Saw helpless him from whom their life began :
 Mem'ry and forecast just returns engage,
 That pointed back to youth, this on to age ;
 While pleasure, gratitude and hope, combin'd, 145
 Still spread the int'rest and preserv'd the kind.

NOR think, in NATURE'S STATE they blindly
 The state of nature was the reign of God : [trod ;
 Self love and social at her birth began,
 Union the bond of all things, and of man. 150
 Pride then was not ; nor arts, that pride to aid ;
 Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade :
 The same his table, and the same his bed ;
 No murder cloth'd him, and no murder fed.
 In the same temple, the resounding wood, 155
 All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God :
 The shrine with gore unstain'd with gold undrest,
 Unbrib'd, unbloody, flood the blameless priest :
 Heav'n's attribute was universal care,
 And man's prerogative, to rule, but spare. 160
 Ah ! how unlike the man of times to come !
 Of half that live the butcher and the tomb ;
 Who, foe to nature, hears the gen'ral groan,
 Murders their species, and betrays his own.
 But just disease to luxury succeeds, 165
 And every death its own avenger breeds ;
 The fury passions from that blood began,
 And turn'd on man a fiercer savage, man.

SEE him from nature rising flow to art !

To copy instinct then was reason's part ! 170

Thus then to man the voice of nature spake—

Go, from the creatures thy instruction take :

Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield ;

Learn from the beasts the physick of the field ;

Thy arts of building from the bee receive ; 175

Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to

Learn of the little nautilus to sail, [weave :

Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.

Here too all forms of social union find,

And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind : 180

Here subterranean works and cities see ;

There towns aerial on the waving tree.

Learn each small people's genius, policies,

The ant's republick, and the realm of bees ;

How those in common all their wealth be-

“ flow, 185

And anarchy without confusion know ;

And these forever, tho' a monarch reign,

Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.

Mark what unvari'd laws preserve each state,

Laws wise as nature, and as fix'd as fate. 190

In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,

Entangle justice in her net of law,

And right, too rigid, harden into wrong ;

Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.

Yet go ! and thus o'er all the creatures sway, 195

Thus let the wiser make the rest obey ;

“ And

“ And for those arts mere instinct could afford,
 “ Be crown’d as monarchs, or as gods ador’d.”

GREAT nature spoke ; observant man obey’d ;
 Cities were built, societies were made : 200
 Here rose one little state ; another near
 Grew by like means, and join’d, thro’ love or fear.
 Did here the trees with ruddier burthen bend,
 And there the streams in purer rills descend ?
 What war could ravish, commerce could bestow, 205
 And he return’d a friend, who came a foe.
 Converse and love, mankind might strongly draw,
 When love was liberty, and nature law.
 Thus states were form’d : The name of king un-
 known,

’Till common int’rest plac’d the sway in one, 210
 ’Twas VIRTUE ONLY (or in arts or arms,
 Diffusing blessings, or averting harms)
 The same which in a fire the sons obey’d,
 A prince the father of a people made.

’TILL then, by nature crown’d, each patriarch
 fate,
 King, priest and parent, of his growing state ; 215
 On him their second providence they hung,
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
 He from the wond’ring furrow call’d the food,
 Taught to command the fire, control the flood, 220
 Draw forth the monsters of th’ abyss profound,
 Or fetch th’ aerial eagle to the ground.

'Till drooping, sick'ning, dying, they began
 Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as man :
 Then, looking up from fire to fire, explor'd, 225
 One great First Father, and that first ador'd.
 Or plain tradition that this all begun,
 Convey'd unbroken faith from fire to son ;
 The worker from the work, distinct was known,
 And simple reason never sought but one : 230
 Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light,
 Man, like his maker, saw that all was right :
 To virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,
 And own'd a father when he own'd a God.
 Love, all the faith, and all th' allegiance then ; 235
 For nature knew no right divine in men,
 No ill could fear in God ; and understood
 A sov'reign being, but a sov'reign good.
 True faith, true policy, united ran,
 That was but love of God, and this of man. 240

WHO first taught souls enslav'd, and realms un-
 Th' enormous faith of many made for one ; [done,
 That proud exception to all nature's laws,
 T' invert the world, and counter work its cause ?
 Force first made conquest, and that conquest, law ;
 'Till superstition taught the tyrant awe, 246
 Then shar'd the tyranny, then lent it aid,
 And gods of conq'rors, slaves of subjects made :
 She, 'midst the lightning's blaze, and thunder's
 sound,

When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the
 [ground, 250

D

She

She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray
 To pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they ;
 She, from the rending earth, and bursting skies,
 Saw gods descend, and fiends infernal rise :
 Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes ; 255
 Fear made her devils, and weak hope her gods ;
 Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
 Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust ;
 Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
 And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe. 260
 Zeal, then, not charity, became the guide ;
 And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.
 Then sacred seem'd th' ethereal vault no more ;
 Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore ;
 Then first the Flamen tasted living food ; 265
 Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood ;
 With Heav'n's own thunders shook the world be-
 And play'd the God an engine on his foe. [low,

So drives self love, thro' just, and thro' unjust,
 To one man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust : 270
 The same self love, in all becomes the cause
 Of what restrains him, government and laws.
 For what one likes, if others like as well,
 What serves one will, when many wills rebel ?
 How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake, 275
 A weaker may surprise, a stronger take ?
 His safety must his liberty restrain ;
 All join to guard what each desires to gain.

Forc'd

Forc'd into virtue thus, by self defence,
 E'en kings learn'd justice and benevolence : 280
 Self love forsook the path it first pursu'd,
 And found the private in the publick good.

'Twas then the studious head or gen'rous mind,
 Follow'r of God, or friend of human kind,
 Poet or patriot, rose but to restore 285
 The faith and moral, nature gave before ;
 Resum'd her ancient light, not kindled new ;
 If not God's image, yet his shadow drew :
 Taught pow'r's due use to people and to kings,
 Taught not to slack, nor strain its tender strings, 290
 The less, or greater, set so justly true,
 That touching one must strike the other two ;
 'Til jarring int'rests, of themselves create
 Th' according musick of a well mix'd state.
 Such is the world's great harmony, that springs 295
 From order, union, full consent of things :
 Where small and great, where weak and mighty
 To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade : [made
 More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,
 And in proportion as it blesses, blest : 300
 Draw to one point, and to one centre bring
 Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king.

FOR forms of government let fools contest ;
 Whate'er is best administer'd is best :
 For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight ; 305
 His can't be wrong whose life is in the right :

In

In faith and hope the world will disagree;
But all mankind's concern is charity :
All must be false that thwart this one great end ;
And all of God, that bleſs mankind or mend. 310
Man like the gen'rous vine, supported lives ;
The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.
On their own axis as the planets run,
Yet make at once their circle round the sun ;
So two conſiſtent motions act the ſoul ; 315
And one regards itſelf, and one the whole.

THUS God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame,
And bade ſelf love and ſocial be the ſame.

EPISTLE



EPISTLE IV.

*Of the NATURE and STATE of MAN with Re-
spect to HAPPINESS.*



THE ARGUMENT.

FALSE notions of happiness, philosophical and popular, answered from ver. 19 to 27. It is the end of all men, and attainable by all, 30. God intends happiness to be equal; and to be so, it must be social, since all particular happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular laws, 37. As it is necessary for order, and the peace and welfare of society, that external goods should be unequal, happiness is not made to consist in these, 51. But notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by Providence, by the two passions of hope and fear, 70. What the happiness of individuals is, as far as it is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good man has here the advantage, 77. The error of imputing to virtue what are only the calamities of nature, or fortune, 94. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favour of particulars, 121. That we are not judges who are good; but that whoever they are, they must be happiest, 133, &c. That external goods are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of virtue, 167. That even these can make no man happy without virtue, 167. That instanced in riches, 185. Honours, 139. Nobility, 205. Greatness, 217. Fame,

237. Superiour Talents, 259, &c. *With pictures of human infelicity in men possessed of them all, 269, &c. That virtue only constitutes happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, 309. That the perfection of virtue and happiness consists in a conformity to the ORDER of PROVIDENCE here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter, 316, &c.*

OH HAPPINESS! our being's end and aim;
 Good, pleasure, ease, content! whate'er thy name:
 That something still which prompts th' eternal
 For which we bear to live, or dare to die, [sigh,
 Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies, 5
 O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool and wise.
 Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,
 Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
 Fair op'ning to some court's propitious shine,
 Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine? 10
 Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
 Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?
 Where grows? where grows it not? If vain our
 We ought to blame the culture, not the soil: [toil,
 Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere, 15
 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where:
 'Tis never to be bought, but always free, [thee.
 And fled from monarchs, St. John! dwells with

Ask of the learn'd the way? The learn'd are blind;
 This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind: 20
 Some

Some place the blifs in action, some in ease,
 Those call it pleasure, and contentment these;
 Some sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;
 Some swell'd to gods, confess e'en virtue vain;
 Or indolent, to each extreme they fall, 25
 To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

WHO thus define it, say they more or less
 Than this, that happiness is happiness?

TAKE nature's path, and mad opinion's leave;
 All states can reach it, and all heads conceive; 30
 Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
 There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;
 And mourn our various portions as we please,
 Equal is common sense, and common ease.

REMEMBER, man, "the Universal Cause" 35
 "Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;"
 And makes what happiness we justly call
 Subsist, not in the good of one, but all.
 There's not a blessing individuals find,
 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind: 40
 No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,
 No cavern'd hermit, rests self satisfi'd:
 Who most to shun or hate mankind pretend,
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend:
 Abstract what others feel, what others think, 45
 All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink:

Each

Each has his share ; and who would more obtain,
Shall find, the pleasure pays not half the pain.

ORDER is Heav'n's first law ; and this confess,
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest, 50
More rich, more wise ; but who infers from hence
That such are happier, shocks all common sense.
Heav'n to mankind impartial we confess,
If all are equal in their happiness :
But mutual wants this happiness increase ; 55
All nature's diff'rence keeps all nature's peace.
Condition, circumstance is not the thing ;
Bliss is the same in subject or in king,
In who obtain defence, or who defend,
In him who is, or him who finds a friend : 60
Heav'n breathes thro' ev'ry member of the whole
One common blessing, as one common soul,
But fortune's gifts if each alike possess,
And each were equal, must not all contest ?
If then to all men happiness was meant, 65
God in externals could not place content.

FORTUNE her gifts may variously dispose,
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those :
But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,
While those are plac'd in hope, and these in fear :
Not present good or ill, the joy or curse, 71
But future views of better, or of worse.

OH sons of earth ! attempt ye still to rise,
By mountains pil'd on mountains to the skies ?

Heav'n

Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys, 75
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

KNOW, all the good that individuals find,
Or God and nature meant to mere mankind,
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, Health, Peace and Compe-
tence.

But health consists with temperance alone : 81
And peace, oh virtue ! peace is all thy own.
The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain ;
But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.
Say, in pursuit of profit or delight, 85
Who risk the most, that take wrong means, or
right ?

Of vice or virtue, whether blest or curst,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first ?
Count all th' advantage prosp'rous vice attains,
Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains : 90
And grant the bad what happiness they would,
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

OH blind to truth, and God's whole scheme be-
low,

Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe !
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best, 95
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.
But fools, the good alone, unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all.

See

See Falkland dies, the virtuous and the just !
 See godlike Turenne prostrate on the dust !
 See Sidney bleeds amid the martial strife !
 Was this their virtue, or contempt of life ?
 Say, was it virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,
 Lamented Digby ! sunk thee to the grave ?
 Tell me, if virtue made the son expire,
 Why, full of days and honour, lives the sire ?
 Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath,
 When nature sicken'd and each gale was death ?
 Or why so long (in life if long can be)
 Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me ?

WHAT makes all physical or moral ill ?
 There deviates nature, and here wanders will.
 God sends not ill, if rightly understood,
 Or partial ill is universal good,
 Or change admits, or nature lets it fall,
 Short, and but rare, 'till man improv'd it all.
 We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain,
 That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,
 As that the virtuous son is ill at ease
 When his lewd father gave the dire disease.
 Think we, like some weak prince, th' Eternal
 Cause,
 Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws ?
 Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
 Forget to thunder, and recal her fires ?
 On air or sea, new motions be impress,
 Oh blameless Bethel ! to relieve thy breast ?

Whe

When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
 Shall gravitation cease, if you go by ?
 Or some old temple nodding to its fall,
 Or Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall ? 130

BUT still this world (so fitted for the knave)
 Contents us not. A better shall we have ?
 A kingdom of the just then let it be :
 But first consider how those just agree.
 The good must merit God's peculiar care ; 135
 But who, but God, can tell us who they are ?
 One thinks on Calvin Heav'n's own spirit fell ;
 Another deems him instrument of hell ;
 Calvin feels Heav'n's blessing, or its rod,
 This cries there is, and that there is no God, 140
 What shocks one part will edify the rest,
 Or with one system can they all be blest.
 The very best will variously incline,
 And what rewards your virtue, punish mine.

WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.—This world, 'tis
 true, 145
 Was made for Cesar—but for Titus too ;
 And which more blest, who chain'd his country,
 Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day ? [say,

“ BUT sometimes virtue starves, while vice is
 fed.”

What then ? Is the reward of virtue bread ? 150
 That,

That, vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil ;
 The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil,
 The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,
 Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.

The good man may be weak, be indolent ; 15
 Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.

But grant him riches, your demand is o'er ?

" No—shall the good want health, the good want
 pow'r ? "

Add health and pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing :

" Why bounded pow'r ? why private ? why not
 king ?

" Nay, why external for internal giv'n ? 16

" Why is not man a god, and earth a heav'n ?

Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive

God gives enough, while he has more to give ;

Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand ; 16

Say, at what part of nature will they stand ?

WHAT nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
 The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart felt joy,
 Is virtue's prize ; a better would you fix ?

Then give Humility a coach and fix, 17

Justice a conqueror's sword, or truth a gown,

Or publick spirit its great cure, a crown,

Weak, foolish man ! will Heav'n reward us there

With the same trash mad mortals wish for here ?

The boy and man an individual makes, 17

Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes ?

Go, like the Indian, in another life
 Expect thy dog, thy bottle and thy wife ;
 As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,
 As toys and empires, for a godlike mind. 180
 Rewards, that either would to virtue bring
 No joy, or be destructive of the thing :
 How oft by these at sixty are undone
 The virtues of a saint at twenty one !
 To whom can riches give repute or trust, 185
 Content, or pleasure, but the good and just ?
 Judges and senates have been bought for gold,
 Esteem and love were never to be sold.
 Oh fool ! to think God hates the worthy mind,
 The lover and the love of human kind, 190
 Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience
 Because he wants a thousand pounds a year. [clear,

HONOUR and shame from no condition rise :
 Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
 Fortune in men has some small diff'rence made, 195
 One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade ;
 The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
 The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd,
 " What differ more (you cry) than crown and
 cowl !"

I'll tell you, friend ; a wise man and a fool. 200
 You'll find if once the monarch acts the monk,
 Or, cobbler like, the parson will be drunk,
 Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow :
 The rest is all but leather or prunella. 204

STUCK oe'r with titles and hung round with
strings,

That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings,
Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece :
But by your father's worth if your's you rate,
Count me those only who were good and great.
Go ! if your ancient, but ignoble blood 211
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,
Go ! and pretend your family is young ;
Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.
What can ennoble fots, or slaves, or cowards ? 215
Alas ! not all the blood of all the Howards.

LOOK next on greatness ; say where greatness
Where, but among the heroes and the wife ? [lies ;
Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede ; 220
The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find
Or make, an enemy of all mankind !
Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,
Yet ne'er looks forward farther than his nose.
No less alike the politick and wise ; 225
All fly slow things, with circumspective eyes :
Men in their loose, unguarded hours they take,
Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.
But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat ;
'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great ; 230
Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,
Is but the more a fool, the more a knave,

Who

Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
Or failing, smiles, in exile or in chains,
Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed 235
Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.

WHAT'S fame? a fanci'd life in others' breath,
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.
Just what you hear, you have, and what's unknown
The same (my lord) if Tully's, or your own. 240
All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes or friends;
To all beside as much an empty shade
An Eugene living, as a Cesar dead;
Alike or when, or where they shone, or shine; 245
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine:
A wit's a feather, and a chief's a rod;
An honest man's the noblest work of God.
Fame but from death a villain's name can save,
As justice tears his body from the grave; 250
When what t' oblivion better were resign'd,
Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.
All fame is foreign, but of true desert;
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:
One self approving hour whole years outweighs 255
Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;
And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
Than Cesar with a senate at his heels.

IN parts superiour what advantage lies?
Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise? 260
'Tis

'Tis but to know how little can be known ;
 To see all others' faults, and feel our own ;
 Condemn'd in bus'ness, or in arts to drudge,
 Without a second, or without a judge :
 Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land ? 265
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
 Painful preeminence ! yourself to view
 Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

BRING then these blessings to a strict account ;
 Make fair deductions ; see to what they 'mount : 270
 How much of other each is sure to cost ;
 How each for other oft is wholly lost ;
 How inconsistent greater goods with these ;
 How sometimes life is risqu'd, and always ease :
 Think, and if still the things they envy call, 275
 Say, would'st thou be the man to whom they fall ?
 To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,
 Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.
 Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life ?
 Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife. 280
 If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,
 The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind :
 Or, ravish'd with the whistling of a name,
 See Cromwell damn'd to everlasting fame !
 If all, united, thy ambition call, 285
 From ancient story, learn to scorn them all.
 There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd and great
 See the false scale of happiness complete !

In

In hearts of kings, or arms of queens who lay,
 How happy those to ruin, these betray. 290
 Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
 From dirt and seaweed, as proud Venice rose :
 In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,
 And all that rais'd the hero, sunk the man :
 Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold, 295
 But stain'd with blood, or ill exchange'd for gold :
 Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
 Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.
 Oh wealth ill fated ! which no act of fame
 E'er taught to shine, or sanctifi'd from shame !
 What greater bliss attends their close of life ? 300
 Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
 The trophi'd arches, story'd halls invade,
 And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.
 Alas ! not dazzled with their noontide ray, 305
 Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day ;
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,
 A tale that blends their glory with their shame !

KNOW then this truth (enough for man to know)
 " Virtue alone is happiness below." 310
 The only point where human bliss stands still,
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill ;
 Where only merit constant pay receives,
 Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives ;
 The joy unequal'd, if its end it gain, 315
 And if it lose, attended with no pain :

Without satiety, tho' e'er so blest'd,
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd :
 The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,
 Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears : 320
 Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,
 For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd ;
 Never elated, while one man's oppress'd ;
 Never dejected, while another's blest'd ;
 And where no wants, no wishes can remain, 325
 Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.

SEE the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow !
 Which whobut feels can taste, but thinks can know :
 Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
 The bad must miss, the good, untaught, will find ; 330
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
 But looks through nature up to nature's God ;
 Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
 Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine ;
 Sees that no being any bliss can know, 335
 But touches some above, and some below ;
 Learns, from this union of the rising whole,
 The first, last purpose of the human soul ;
 And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
 All end, in LOVE OF GOD, and LOVE OF MAN.
 For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal, 341
 And opens still, and opens on his soul ;
 'Till lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfin'd,
 It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.

He

He sees why nature plants in man alone 345
 Hope of known blifs, and faith in blifs unknown :
 (Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
 Are giv'n in vain; but what they seek, they find)
 Wife is her present; she connects in this
 His greatest virtue with his greatest blifs; 350
 At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
 And strongest motive to assist the rest.

SELF love thus push'd to social, to divine,
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.
 Is this too little for thy boundless heart? 355
 Extend it, let thy enemies have part :
 Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
 In one close system of benevolence :
 Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
 And height of blifs but height of charity. 360

GOD loves from whole to parts : But human
 Must rise from individual to the whole. [soul
 Self love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
 The centre mov'd, a circle-strait succeeds 365
 Another still, and still another spreads ;
 Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace ;
 His country next ; and next all human race :
 Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind
 Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind ; 370
 Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
 And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

COME

COME then, my friend! my genius! come a.
 Oh master of the poet, and the song! [long;
 And while the muse now floops, or now ascends, 375
 To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,
 Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
 To fall with dignity, with temper rise;
 Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer
 From grave to gay, from lively to severe; 380
 Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
 Intent to reason, or polite to please.
 Oh! while along the stream of time thy name
 Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;
 Say, shall my little bark attendant sail, 385
 Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
 When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
 Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
 Shall then this verse to future age pretend
 Thou wert my guide, philosopher and friend? 390
 That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art,
 From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;
 For wit's false mirror held up nature's light;
 Shew'd erring pride, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT;
 That Reason, Passion, answer one great aim; 395
 That true Self love and Social are the same;
 That Virtue only makes our bliss below;
 And all our knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW.



T H E

UNIVERSAL PRAYER.*

DEO OPT. MAX.

FATHER of all ! in ev'ry age,
In ev'ry clime ador'd
By faint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord !

Thou Great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confin'd
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind :

Yet

* It may be proper to observe, that some passages, in the preceding essay, having been unjustly suspected of a tendency towards deism and naturalism, the author composed this prayer as the sum of all, to shew that his system was founded in free will, and terminated in piety ; that the first cause was as well the Lord and Governour of the universe as the Creator of it ; and that, by submission to his will (the great principle enforced throughout the essay) was not meant the suffering of ourselves to be carried along by blind determination, but the resting in a religious acquiescence, and confidence full of hope and immortality. To give all this the greater weight, the poet chose for his model the *Lord's Prayer*, which, of all others, best deserves the title prefixed to his paraphrase.

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill ;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me, more than hell to shun,
That, more than heav'n pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away ;
For God is paid when man receives,
T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay :
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has deni'd,
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see ;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean tho' I am, not wholly so,
Since quicken'd by thy breath !
O lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Thro' this day's life or death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot :
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st it best bestow'd or not,
And let thy will be done.

To thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies !
One chorus let all being raise !
All nature's incense rise !

FINIS.



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